

Getting the inactive active -the benefits of increasing levels of physical activity – Health Select Committee

If a medication existed which had a similar effect it would be regarded as a 'wonder drug' or a 'miracle cure'. Sir Liam Donaldson 2009

1 Definition of physical activity

- 1.1 Physical activity includes all forms of activity such as everyday walking and cycling to get from A to B, active play, work related activity, active recreation, dancing, gardening or playing active games as well as organised and competitive sport.
- 1.2 Three aspects of physical activity are important:
Duration, Intensity, Frequency

2 Key messages:

- At present, only 10% of adults in Lewisham achieve Chief Medical Officer targets of 30mins moderate physical activity, five times per week
- An estimated 10,000 adults per year would need to get more active to reach 2020 targets of 70% doing 5 x 30mins
- Because so many people in the UK are inactive, the greatest population benefit will occur when inactive people begin some activity.
- To make progress we need to:

Encourage more people to *do what they already do in more active ways*

Encourage mass participation

- **Adults (19-64)** should aim to be active daily - Moderate activity in 10 min spans to make 150 minutes per week or 30 minutes x 5 days a week
- *Muscle strengthening activity at least 2 days a week*
- **Older Adults** – same as above, those at risk of falls should incorporate PA to improve balance and co-ordination 2 days a week
- *Adults should minimise sedentary behaviour (sitting)*

- The NHS and its partners have developed a Physical Activity Strategy which aims to increase the level of activity of inactive people. This strategy also has an annual action plan which is led by the Lewisham Physical Activity Partnership and aims to deliver the strategy.

- The action plan is monitored through the Physical activity partnership each quarter and evaluated annually .

3 What do we know about the fitness levels of Lewisham residents?

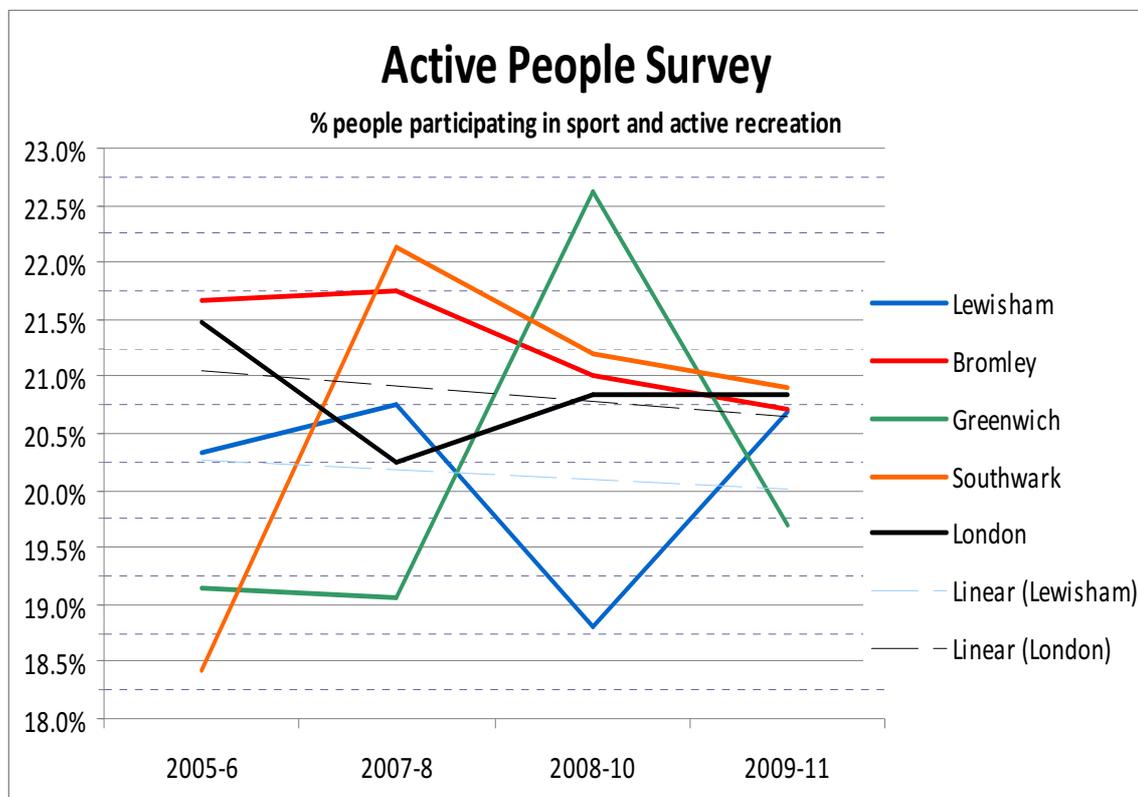
3.1 Measuring Physical Activity

Various indicators are used to measure PA in adults via the Active People Survey (all are self reported)

5x30 per week (CMO recommendation)
 3x30 per week (including recreational walking and cycling)
 65+ :3x30 and includes five light intensity sports.

Active People Survey (Old NI8)

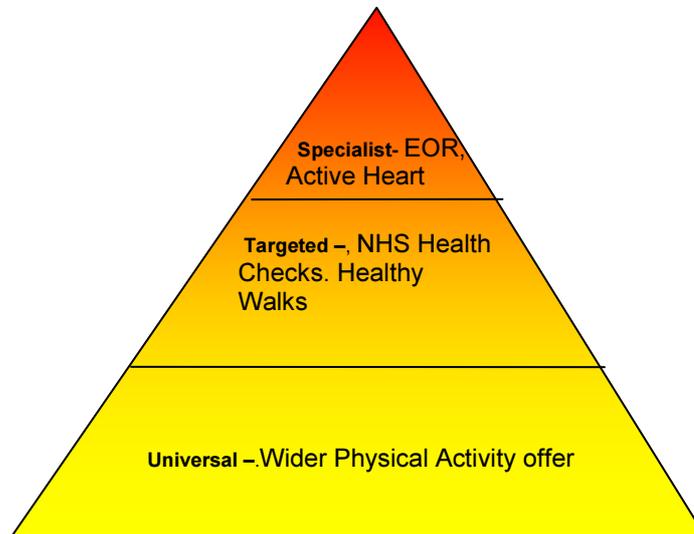
	2005-6	2007-8	2008-10	2009-11
Lewisham	20.3%	20.8%	18.8%	20.7%
Bromley	21.7%	21.8%	21.0%	20.7%
Greenwich	19.1%	19.1%	22.6%	19.7%
Southwark	18.4%	22.1%	21.2%	20.9%
London	21.5%	20.3%	20.8%	20.8%



3.2 Levels of PA (3x30) in Lewisham by Gender, Age, Ethnicity and Socio Economic Status 2010

- Males are more active than females
- Young people more active than older people
- Able bodied more active than people with LTLI
- White people slightly more active than people who are not white
- Affluent people more active than those less affluent

4 What's on offer in Lewisham to help to increase residents' levels of physical activity



4.1 In terms of activity for residents, the activities available currently fall into three areas:

- **Specialist**, which are programmes subject to strict regulation and protocol and currently include the Exercise on referral scheme which targets those with high BMI (body/mass index), and those with a range of health issues such as diabetes and asthma. Also the Active Heart programme where University Hospital Lewisham (UHL) refers patients post cardiac events in to low level exercise with specially trained instructors.

- **Targeted**, which are programmes aimed at those at risk of potentially developing health problems such as the NHS Health checks programme aimed at the 40-74 age range and the Healthy Walks programme. The health check aims to pick up those who may be at risk of CVD, and Type 2 Diabetes and following a health check, residents can be offered these services to support any lifestyle changes they are recommended to make. Where people are unsure or ambivalent around change, a health motivator can talk them through their options and support them to increase their activity levels. Feedback from residents on the 2010 programme was as follows:

- No negative feedback was received. Positive comments included:

- Enjoyed lessons and I will continue to exercise.
- I absolutely love this class, my energy levels have improved. Brilliant teacher.
- I intend to be more active. Thoroughly enjoyed it.
- We desperately need more classes like these.
- Enabled me to get up and start moving more.
- The Dance classes have been a joy!
- Wonderful Classes

- Sessions were adaptable for older people
- Very helpful instructions to improve my general health.
- Pilates has made vast improvements to my body.
- Very beneficial to my wellbeing
- Would like to see this scheme maintained, it'll keep us out of hospital.

- **Universal** activities, which include Everyday activities, Active recreation and Sport. In terms of the '*universal*' offer for general exercise and fitness, there are a variety of delivery agencies such as

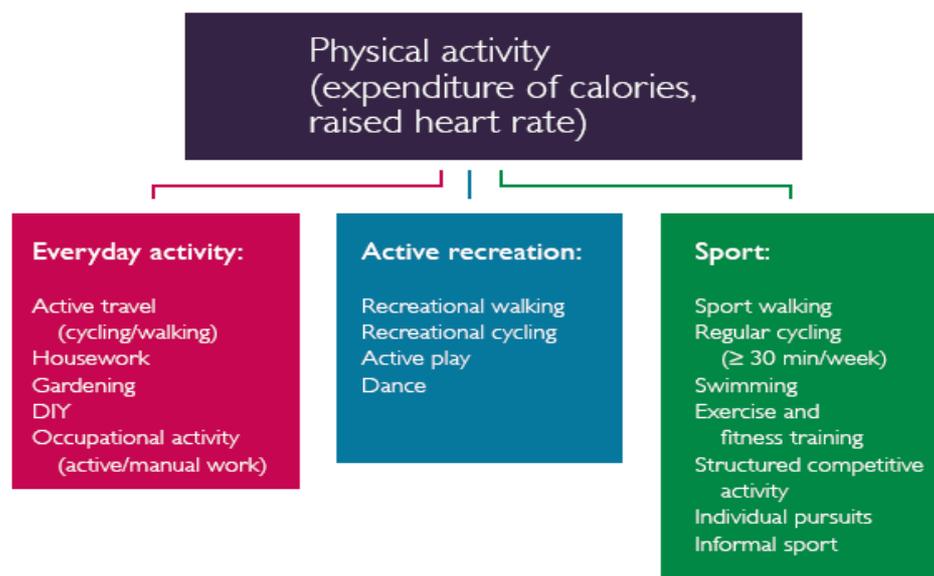
- * Leisure Centres (council run)
- * Leisure centres (privately run)
- * Community sporting centres (voluntary and private sectors)
- * Parks (council run)
- * Playing fields (school, council, voluntary and private sectors)
- * School facilities (council and privately run)

- These all provide activities at a range of prices. The Lewisham Plus Card scheme which is a leisure discount card operates across council facilities. The Lewisham Plus Card scheme enables a reduction in costs by x% for people on low income. For people over 60 years of age and for disabled residents on benefits, and carers, several activities are free of charge. This is currently being reviewed with a view to a better offer from agencies (yoga, zumba, tai chi) and it should be re launched in the new financial year. In terms of disabled residents, many of the leisure centres have adapted equipment as well as a target to increase usage by disabled people as part of their annual plans.

4.2 Lewisham Council and NHS Lewisham are focusing over the next two years on developing industrial interventions in relation to 4 key activities in supporting more inactive people to become active. Industrial interventions are those that can impact on a large number of people, rather than targeted smaller localised initiatives and may sometimes be available through contractual arrangements with the different sectors. These are Swimming, Dance, Walking and Cycling. Sport for both young people and adults will also underpin this. An early intervention is key for future healthy lifestyles.

- Some industrial interventions will be implemented through our contractual arrangements with Leisure companies. For example, in terms of Swimming the council has secured free swimming for 16 and unders and 60+ for a minimum of 15 years. This should in time show increased uptake in swimming leading to improvements in health when allied to continued marketing and promotion. In addition, Top Up Swim has been promoted for the past two years and gives the opportunity at year 7 for young people who have not learnt to swim at primary school the chance to learn in a number of half term crash courses.

Promoting Physical Activity Model



The following information illustrates how activities identified in the above diagram are developed and delivered in Lewisham

4.3 Everyday Activity

4.3.1 Walking - Walking has a fundamental role to play in achieving the objectives of Lewisham's Physical Activity Plan (2010-2013) and will become one of the four key themes from 2012. The Chief Medical Officer's physical activity guidelines (July 2011) reinforce the importance of walking, both as an effective form of physical activity in its own right and an entry point to more vigorous exercise. It offers increased opportunities for social interaction contributing to safer and more vibrant neighbourhoods, reducing traffic congestion and generating economic benefits.

A broad range of walking activities are available locally including innovative programmes. Regeneration initiatives have created new opportunities for walking across the borough. There is minimal data on the numbers of residents that regularly walk in Lewisham and the Physical Activity Partnership will look at how this can be developed. A more strategic approach is planned from April 2012 with a distinct walking plan that will aim to achieve an 'industrial' level of engagement.

4.3.2 Cycling – For most people, the easiest and most acceptable forms of physical activity are those that can be incorporated into everyday life. Cycling, like walking fulfils this role and following the initial cost, presents a relatively cheap, practical and accessible method of being active. It is also a relatively effective means of exercise when compared to walking. The 'MET' or metabolic equivalent intensity level (MET), is a widely utilised means of measuring the body's metabolic rate as compared to the standard resting metabolic rate of approximately 1. While walking typically has a value of 2 – 3 METs, cycling at an average commuting speed of 10 mph (16.6 kmh) has a value of 4 METs.

- The Council has entered into a partnership with the National Governing Body of cycling, British Cycling, in 2011 in order to increase the borough's capacity to

effectively promote and encourage more cycling. The partnership has two key aims: 1) to increase the number of people cycling in the borough (please see recreational cycling section below); 2) to support the development of a more strategic and co-ordinated approach to promoting and supporting cycling in the borough. The latter will be facilitated through the development of a Cycle stakeholder group and accompanying action plan/strategy. Both are currently under development and are due to be in place by March 2012.

4.3.3 Housework, Gardening, DIY and Occupational activity

- These activities, while not measurable, certainly do take place, across the households of Lewisham. These activities are sometimes part of day to day life and others are more enjoyable. However, a key promotion will be to make the link in people's minds that as they undertake such activity, it is benefitting their health too and to raise awareness of the meaning of an 'active' lifestyle. In addition to household activities, there are organised group environmental activities that people enjoy being a part of such as Nature's Gym which started in June 2008 and has had over 200 different volunteers working on over 40 different sites. Other organisations such as Friends of Park groups also have activity days such as river clean ups or park projects. Gardening of course is a traditional activity and there has also been an upsurge of gardening projects like community gardens.

4.4 Active recreation

4.4.1 Recreational Walking – There are a number of ward walks where local volunteers have been trained as walk leaders and provide a range of walks for local people to be social, be active and be healthy. These are increasing and there are plans to develop more targeted walks such as walks linked to a visit to a cultural building and back to a café. There are also a number of mapped walks and again this is something that the Physical Activity Partnership wishes to expand on.

4.4.2 Recreational Cycling – Recreational cycling plays an essential role within overall efforts to encourage more cycling by offering the chance to rediscover skills and build confidence in an enjoyable and non-threatening environment – usually with people of a similar ability or fitness level. A core element of the work with British Cycling (referred to in 4.3.2) has been to encourage more people to take up recreational cycling. This work was initiated in the borough in the summer of 2011 with the delivery of a programme of 25 'Sky Ride local' 'led' rides. Almost 700 people registered on the rides with over 200 people participating - illustrating the potential demand in the borough but also reflecting an overall national trend of no shows and cancellations during a summer of poor weather. 58% of respondents to British Cycling's 2011 participant survey said that participating in the programme had resulted in them cycling more often, however. As a result of this programme, 10 cycle routes have been designed and 19 Ride Leaders and 8 Route Planners trained ensuring that the foundations of a future cycling legacy are being established.

4.4.3 Active Play

- Lewisham provides a variety of play spaces from large nature sites like Honor Oak Adventure Play Ground (APG), to more inner city sites such as Deptford APG to indoor sites such as Woodpecker Youth club or Ladywell Youth village. All of the current sites provide a quality service to young people from across the borough with sites open to the public 5 days a week, 50 weeks of the year after school, weekends and school holidays.

- Activities offered differ from site to site although the service is always developing. These include robust often physically demanding play in safe supervised settings including a range of sports , both indoor and out, arts and craft projects and games. The service also supports a wide variety of residential and day trips through out the year which give young people opportunities to experience different activities, environments and a chance to interact with their peers without potential pressures placed upon them in their home and school environments.

The quality of these services are high and are designed to be both fun as well as giving children and young people a chance to experience new skills. The range of activities attracts large numbers of young people who appreciate the non-prescriptive approach. Over Summer 2011 c.3000 young people attended youth facilities with the APGs averaging over 60 users per day. The service utilises this access to young people to provide outreach specialist programmes including work around sexual health, drugs awareness and adolescent mental health.

4.4.4 Dance :

- A strong body of research now exists that demonstrates the positive impact of dance on health and well being. Benefits include physical improvements (in lung function and flexibility) as well as psychological wellbeing and social inclusion. Trinity Laban led a research project into the health benefits of dance programmes for young girls in 2010. The research concluded that creative dance can provide physical and psychological benefits for young girls that are equal to and at times better than the benefits of physical education.

- Lewisham has a well developed dance sector, largely as a result of Laban's location in the north of the borough and the strong community education programme managed by the organisation. In addition to Laban, there are in the region of 60 organisations/providers of dance activities:

- 40 provide adult activities
- 36 provide activities for children and young people
- 17 provide activities for older people

- Classes are available in 16 dance styles locally. In addition, a number of cultural community organisations offer tuition in a range of traditional dance styles e.g. Tamil, Indian, Irish, Chinese/Vietnamese and Turkish. The most recent local survey of dance class attendances (attendances NOT number of individuals attending) in 2009/10 indicated this was around 155,000.

- The Council invests approximately £150k in supporting dance organisations to deliver a range of programmes for Lewisham residents as part of the main grants programme. Dance organisations also deliver initiatives in the borough that are self sustaining or funded by other agencies, including NHS. Dance organisations were funded as part of the MEND programme tackling obesity in children and can make a positive contribution in this area. As part of Lewisham's Cultural Olympiad programme, the borough is working with Big Dance, a biennial, pan London festival that forms part of the Festival 2012. Building on the dance flash mobs in 2010, a range of projects will take place in the public realm including Big Dance picnics at Laban, Bellingham Festival and Horniman Museum.

4.5 Sport

4.5.1 Engaging in sport at any time, but particularly in early life can provide a platform for a healthier later life. There are many local clubs, organisations and teams in the Borough who, on a voluntary basis, provide hours of opportunity for engaging in sport for all ages. The Council has supported the development of Sport for many years and is particularly keen for local sporting organisations (both voluntary and private), and bodies of interest to lead the way in specific sports development. To this end it has developed with those organisations a Borough Sports Plan and allied sport specific development plans. A framework for sport and physical activity has been developed to show how sport is led and delivered in the Borough.

4.5.2 Sport in Schools. Since the cessation of the School Sport Partnership Funding in August 2011, the school sports landscape has changed.

- With the introduction of the new 'School Games', funding has been secured for 2 School Games Organisers, working across the Borough. These posts are managed by Haberdashers' Aske's Knights Academy and Prendergast Ladywell Fields College. This new infrastructure is working closely with schools, the Lewisham Secondary Sports Association and the Council Sport and Leisure Service to provide schools with the opportunities to be part of the School Games from a local intra school level through to a Regional London level. Local sport clubs and team are increasingly cementing their links with schools to provide exit routes for young people.

- All schools are encouraged to register at www.yourschoolgames.com where they'll then receive additional resources, support, access to funding and rewards.

- There are currently a number of regional events where young people can show their talent such as the London mini marathon and the London Youth Games. These events have been stepping stones to many now prominent athletes.

4.5.3 Sport Walking

- The Borough does not have a strong history of sport walking or race walking where one foot or part of a foot must always be in contact with the ground throughout the duration of the walk, and which is an Olympic sport. However as part of the Council's continued development of walking to attract a wide body of interest, Nordic Walking has been piloted recently with some interest and is something that would certainly be of interest to those who have been active as it is more aligned with moderate – high intensity walking, although equally the use of walking poles can help those with joint problems.

- In terms of cycling, in addition to previous activity mentioned in this paper, the British Cycling/Lewisham Council partnership will be looking at barriers to cycling including discussions with Transport for London about bringing some of the pay as you go cycle units to Lewisham, and also establishing the Wheels for Wellbeing cycle scheme in the Borough to enable more disabled people to cycle.

4.5.4 Swimming. In terms of swimming as a sport, Saxon Crown Swimming Club is the long established Borough Swimming Club. There has been a strong relationship between this club and the Council in the joint interest of promoting swimming for health but also as a competitive sport. There is also the Tiger Sharks Swimming Club which is a competitive disability swimming club and trains alongside the swimmers in Saxon Crown. There are two new swimming pools being built in the Borough which will be open over the coming 2 years and will enable both clubs to maintain some stability in terms of their home pools and their membership.

4.5.5 Exercise and Fitness. Through our two leisure contracts, and a range of private and voluntary facilities and organisation a wide range of exercise and fitness activity is available. Currently the Council is developing a web-based physical activity directory which will enable any organisation delivering activity to upload its information to the web site to gain new members, and increase sustainability. It will also give residents the opportunity to search for specific activity by location, time and other criteria.

4.5.6 Structured Competitive Activity. The sport clubs and teams in the borough whether junior or adult tend to be linked to a national governing body and through that to a variety of ladders and leagues. There are key elements in the borough's provision which enhance competition such as fit for purpose facilities, entry points as beginners or as young people, opportunities to play in a supervised environment (ie with referees and officials), and opportunities to continue on a pathway to excellence. This pathway and all these elements are contained within the Borough Sports Plan which offers guidance and targets that have been agreed by the voluntary sports sector, as well as the national governing bodies of sport.

4.5.7 Individual Pursuits:

- Again through the local clubs and national governing bodies, residents interested in individual pursuits such as wrestling, fencing, boxing, marathon running, can usually link to regular activity and pursue this if required to different levels. The F.A.N.S. (free access to national sportspeople) scheme is supported by the council giving some free access to leisure facilities for training for elite athletes.

4.5.8 Informal Sport:

- Parks provide a number of informal opportunities for sport such as free access to tennis courts and the grassed areas can be used for football and other sports at short notice. Increasingly London parks are installing Adizones or similar outdoor fitness equipment that is free of charge to use, and unlike the old trim trail, is much more attractive and easier to use.

- Swimming pools offer informal swimming and lane swimming is quite prevalent to enable a range of swimming to take place. Also, a number of leisure programmes like mother and toddler swims and family swims also offer informal sport opportunity.

Katrina McCormick /Annette Stead

5.12.11